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ABSTRACT

The objective for the Kansas Right-to-Read Program is to assure that every child enrolled in regular classrooms in public schools in Kansas shall be able to read fifth grade level material with at least 75 percent comprehension and a reading rate of at least 125 words per minute. This objective will hopefully be reached by 1980. It is proposed that during the 1970-71 school year a reading test be given each fifth grade student in Kansas. The results of this examination will be analyzed and used as a basis for activities during summer workshops, which will emphasize training for the elementary classroom teacher. The activities for the workshops are outlined for 1971-72 through 1976-80. Possible incentive/motivational strategies are listed, including (1) one hour of credit toward certification renewal; (2) release time for teachers to take part in the inservice programs; (3) a stipend for each participant in the inservice program; and (4) graduate credits for the inservice course participants. The remainder of the proposal discusses the rationale for teacher-oriented programs, the extent of the problem, comparison research, and innovation and change in reading instruction. (WR)

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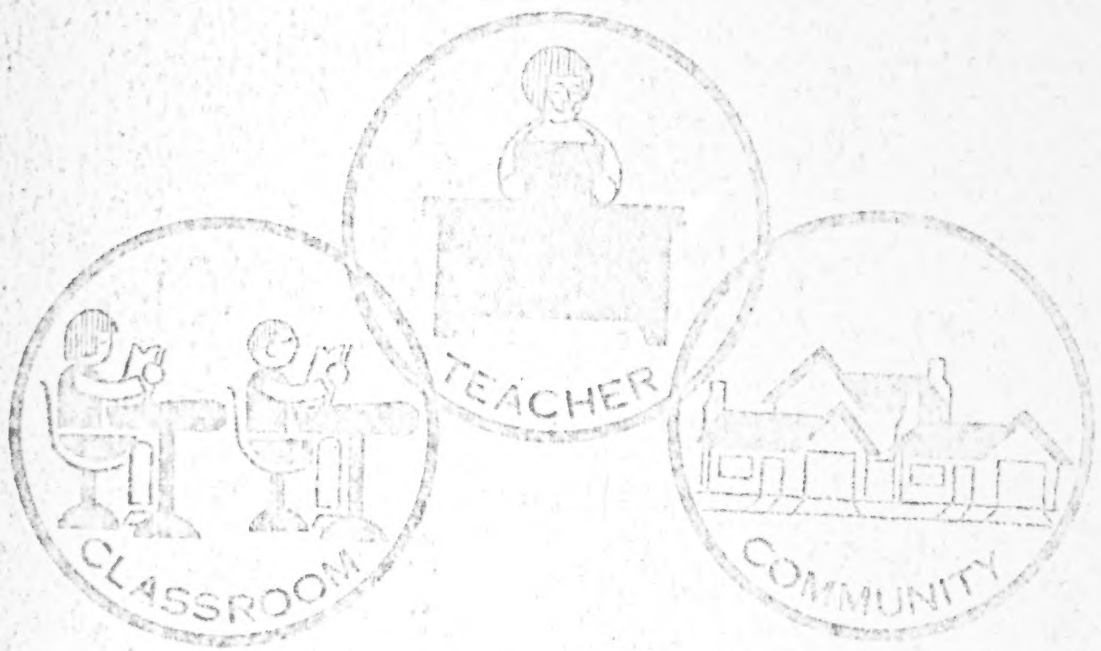
KANSAS Right-to-Read PLAN



TEACHERS OF READING AT ALL LEVELS

Pre-School
Elementary
Secondary
Post Secondary
Basic Adult

CS 000 344

PURPOSE

1980 -- Purpose for the National Right-to-Read Program:
To assure that every child shall leave the public schools with the desire and skill to read up to his capacity.

Objective for the Kansas Right-to-Read Program:
To assure that every child enrolled in regular classrooms in public schools in Kansas shall be able to read fifth grade level material with at least 75% comprehension and a reading rate of at least 125 words per minute. If a criterion measure is developed by the National Right-to-Read Program in the time between 1970 and 1980, such a criterion may be substituted for the criterion defined above.

POLICY STATEMENT

OF

KANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Recognizing the essential need for all individuals to learn to read effectively and accepting instruction in this skill as a major responsibility of the public schools, the State Board of Education herewith established as one of its items of top priority the development of a state-wide program leading toward the continual improvement of reading. The need to improve the training of staff and the application of research evidence leading toward a better understanding of how children learn need to be incorporated in such a program. The State Board of Education calls upon all of those in the school systems in the state and other citizens to encourage and participate in every way possible to improve the learning opportunities of all of our young citizens.

KANSAS RIGHT-TO-READ PROGRAM

I. Assessment of Needs

An assessment of the reading needs of Kansas school children is essential not only to establish base line data but also to provide for future evaluation. It is proposed that during the school year of 1970 - 71, a designated reading test be given to each 5th grade student in Kansas. This test is to be administered during the month of September throughout the state. The results of this examination will be analyzed and used as a basis for activities during summer workshops. Periodic measurements in ensuing years will be administered to determine the impact the Right-to-Read effort has upon the school population of Kansas.

II. Design for Summer Workshops

It is anticipated that test results will indicate that Kansas does have children who are not reading to their capacity. Research is definite regarding the importance of the classroom teacher in the teaching of reading process. Harris and Morrison (1969) state " . . . teacher is far more important than the method. It is recommended, therefore, that in-service workshops and expert consultative help be provided for all teachers and especially for those with minimal experience." A number of other educators have also indicated the need for concentrating on the "teacher" in reading rather than the method. Further supporting research is detailed in another section of this document. Consequently, the Kansas Right-to-Read plan is teacher oriented in the form of in-service type workshops. Basically, these workshops will emphasize

training for the elementary classroom teacher. However, the flexibility of these workshops should be noted. It is the intent of this plan to offer assistance to teachers of reading at all levels, i.e., pre-school, elementary, secondary, vo-tech, and adult basic education, and any other areas as the needs may indicate.

A. Workshop Objectives

1. As a result of this workshop, the teacher will --

   a. be able to analyze the child's strengths and weaknesses in reading so as to provide a corrective program that will take advantage of what the child does will and attack those skills he lacks.

   b. be able to distinguish and discriminate among different methodologies.

   c. be able to define, describe, and demonstrate effective utilization of instructional materials and equipment needed.

   d. be able to evaluate students' reading skill levels continually as measured by standardized or teacher-prepared tests.

2. The teacher will be able, as a local consultant, to organize and direct an in-district program for teacher, dealing with reading and related information.

3. The teacher will be able, as a local consultant, to organize and direct an in-district program for parents, dealing with reading and related information.

4. The teacher will be able, as a local consultant, to coordinate incoming information on the State's Right-to-Read program and activities.

5. The teacher will be able, as a local consultant, to assist in and coordinate the collection of data for a needs assessment program.

B. Procedures

1. Each school district will select one elementary classroom teacher to participate in a Summer Activity Workshop.
2. Five Summer Activity Workshops will be organized in the state at designated locations. Workshop activities will include:
   a. Orientation and practice in using select diagnostic reading tests
   b. Review and observation of reading instructional methodologies
   c. Exposure and utilization of various instructional materials
   d. Orientation and practice in evaluation of students' reading skills
   e. Orientation to procedures and materials for using in in-service consultation work back in the district
   f. Orientation to procedures and materials for organizing parent education programs
   g. Orientation to procedures and materials related to the state's reading informational system
   h. Orientation to possible procedures and instrumentation related to needs assessment and feedback data on reading
   i. Methodology for presentation of these activities will include:
      (1) Video tapes
      (2) Multi-media presentations
      (3) Actual classroom observations

(4) Feedback from classroom observational systems (Flander's, etc.)

(5) Demonstration teaching

(6) Practicum work

(7) Simulation

(8) Micro-teaching

(9) Other involvement activities

Each of the seminars will have approximately 30 participants and will be one or two weeks in length. Special selected content areas may be included in the sessions as reflected by the needs expressed by the teachers in the schools feeding into the five centers.

3. The teachers trained in these workshops will be designated as the In-Service and Information Consultant in their respective districts. They will, during the following school year, work with 10 teachers in their district in a consultative and in-service activities position in order to up-grade the district's reading instruction. Guidelines, instructional aids and materials, and teachers' in-service packets will be furnished the consultants to assist in implementing this program. The district will also have access to outside consultative service to deal with special problems that may arise. The district's In-Service and Information Consultants will organize and inform parent groups of reading topics and will act as disseminators of any data coming out of the state's reading informational system and as collectors of data of needs assessments and evaluation feedback activities.

4. The process of training additional In-Service and Information Consultants in subsequent Summer Workshops and with follow-

up-during-the-school-year sessions with 10 teachers will continue in each following year. Progression-wise, this would mean that within a four-year period of time this program would contact every teacher in the state and every school district. After the initial four-year program this same procedure could be used to key in on special needs related to geographic areas, specific age children, special reading programs or methodologies and findings from other reading programs in the state. Single-day summer workshops will be organized in the third summer to re-orientate the consultants trained in the first two summer programs.

C. Schedule of Activities

1. School Year 1971 - 72

   a. Organization and development of overall project

   b. Development of evaluation procedures for project

   c. Orientation of school districts to In-Service and Information Systems Project

   d. Selection of workshop participants

   e. Selection of workshop sites

   f. Development of workshop contents

   g. Development of workshop materials

   h. Developmental of school year in-service materials and guides

   i. Development of State's reading information system

   j. Development of guides and materials for parent education programs on reading

2. Summer 1971 (30 consultants)

   a. First Summer Activity Workshops

b. Development and revision of necessary guides and materials for in-service program and parent education program

3. School year 1971 - 73 (300 teachers)
   a. Establishment of in-district in-service programs - 10 teachers per each consultant
   b. Revision and further development of guides and materials for In-Service and Information System
   c. Establishment of in-district parent education programs
   d. Selection of a second teacher from each district for the second Summer Activity Workshop
   e. Monitoring of In-Service and Information System
4. Summer 1973 (150 consultants)
   a. Second Summer Activity Workshop
   b. Evaluation of first year of In-Service and Information System
5. School year 1973 - 74 (1500 teachers)
   a. Implementation of second year of in-service programs - 10 teachers per each consultant in Summer 1972 and Summer 1973 Action Workshops
   b. Revision and further development of guides and materials for In-Service and Information System
   c. Selection of participants for the third Summer Activity Workshop
   d. Continue in-district parent education programs
6. Summer 1974 (150 consultants)
   a. Third Summer Activity Workshop
   b. Evaluation of second year of In-Service and Information System

c. Single-day refresher workshop for first and second summer consultants

7. School year 1974 - 75 (3000 teachers)
   a. Implementation of third year of in-service programs
   b. Revision and further development of guides and materials for In-Service and Information System
   c. Selection of participants for the fourth Summer Activity Workshops
   d. Preparation of special materials and guidelines based on results of other state reading projects
   e. Preparation of special materials and procedures for specialized reading programs related to different ages and proficiency levels of children and other factors
8. Summer 1975 (150 consultants)
   a. Fourth Summer Activity Workshops
   b. Evaluation of third year of In-Service and Information System
   c. Several of the workshops will use the specialized material and content
9. School year 1975 - 76 (4500 teachers)
   a. Implementation of fourth year of in-service programs
   b. Revision and further development of guides and materials for In-Service and Information System
   c. Preparation of special materials and guidelines based on results of other state reading projects
   d. Preparation of special materials and procedures for specialized reading programs related to different ages and proficiency levels of children and other factors

10. Summer 1976

    a. Selected Summer Activity Workshops using the specially prepared content of materials

    b. Preparation of personnel and further development of procedures and instrumentation to implement a major evaluation of the In-Service and Information System

11. School year 1976 - 77

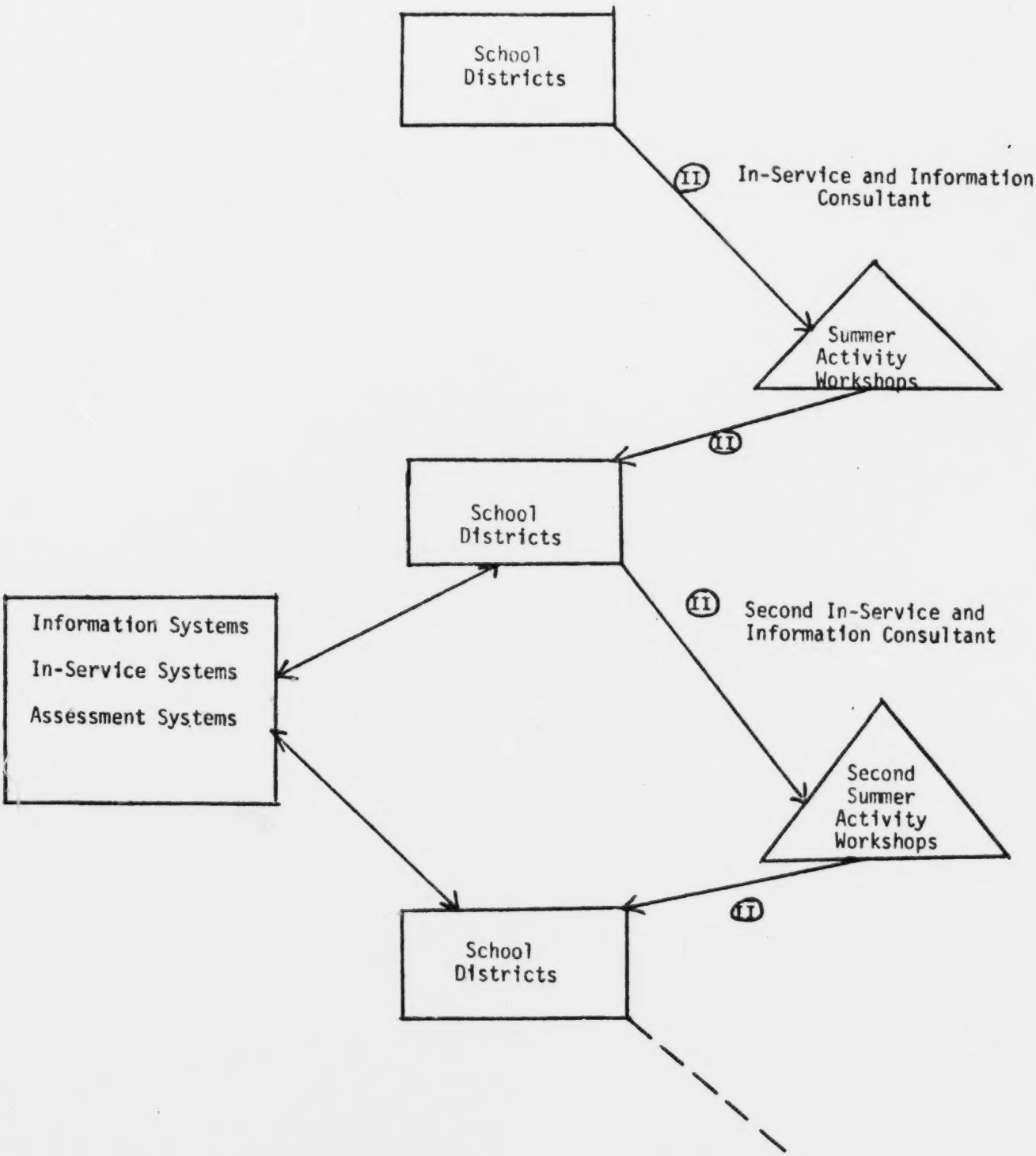
    a. Major summary evaluation of the In-Service and Information System

12. 1976 - 1980

    a. Revision of In-Service and Information System

    b. Implementation of revised In-Service and Information System

In-Service and Information System Flow



POSSIBLE INCENTIVE/MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES

1. State Certification Division: The In-Service and Information Consultants would get two hours of credit and the teachers would receive one hour of credit toward certification renewal.
2. The local school district's Board of Education would give "board credits" to meet the district's continuous education requirements.
3. Local school districts provide release time for teachers to take part in the in-service programs.
4. Each participant in the in-service would receive a stipend.
5. Provide for increase in state aid for school districts participating. (Extra weighting in the formula for the state finance foundation Program.)
6. The state universities and colleges allow graduate credits for the in-service courses.

THE RIGHT TO READ

One out of every four students nationwide has significant reading deficiencies.[1]

In large city school systems up to half of the students read below expectation.[1]

There are more than three million illiterates in our adult population.[1]

About half of the unemployed youth in New York City, ages 16-21, are functionally illiterate.[1]

Three-quarters of the juvenile offenders in New York City are two or more years retarded in reading.[1]

In a recent U.S. Armed Forces program called Project 100,000, 68.2 percent of the young men fell below grade seven in reading and academic ability.[1]

Twenty-five million job holders may be denied advancement by reading weaknesses.[2]

Within the existing educational system across the nation, an estimated 15 percent of otherwise able students experience difficulty in learning to read. This difficulty is of sufficient severity to impair seriously the overall learning experience of these students and their ultimate usefulness and adaptability to a modern society. Among the underprivileged, the problem is even more pervasive.[3]

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[1]The Right to Read--Target for the 70's, Address by James E. Allen, Jr., U. S. Commissioner of Education.

[2]The Right to Read: The Role of the Volunteer, Address by James E. Allen, Jr., Assistant Secretary for Education and U. S. Commissioner of Education.

[3]Reading Disorders in the United States, Report of The Secretary's (HEW) National Advisory Committee on Dyslexia and Related Reading Disorders, August, 1969.

Rationale for Teacher-Orientated Programs

A. Sterl Artley (1969) in a recent article on improvement of reading instruction states: " . . . to improve pupil achievement in reading one should look first at the teacher and his training." He further states:

"It is not until we have seen the results of teacher characteristics or interaction, or behavior, or whatever, on pupil development that we will have something that we can use in teacher education."

A number of other educators have also indicated the need for concentrating on the "teacher" in reading, rather than the method of reading. Some of these comments are:

"Recent research has amply demonstrated that the difference among teachers are far more important than differences among methods and materials in influencing the reading achievement of children." Albert Harris (1969)

" . . . teacher is far more important than the method. It is recommended, therefore, that in-service workshops and expert consultative help be provided for all teachers and especially for those with minimal experience." Harris and Morrison (1969)

"The thing that the study probably illustrates more clearly is that the influence of the teacher is greater than that of a particular method, a certain variety of materials, or a specific plan of organization. Given a good teacher other factors in teaching reading tend to pale insignificance." W. S. Ramsey (1962)

"With regards to reading methods and material . . . no one approach is so distinctly better in all situations . . . To improve reading instruction, it is necessary to train better teachers of reading rather than to expect a panacea in the form of materials." Bond and Dykstra (1967)

"Future research might well center on teacher and learning situations and characteristics rather than method and materials. The tremendous range among classrooms within any method points out the importance of elements in the learning situation over and above the methods employed. To improve reading instruction, it is necessary to train better teachers of reading rather than to expect a panacea in the form of materials." Ralph Staiger (1968)

With regards to further teacher training, the Michigan-Ohio Regional Educational Laboratory has stated:

"The learning of children is influenced by a number of factors. Among the most potent of these are home environment, community attitudes, available financial support, the school environment, the learner and the teacher. Even though the above and others are potent factors, all are not equally controllable. For example, environment and community attitudes are less controllable than the school environment, the learner

or the teacher. As teachers have a great influence on factors such as school environment and the learner, and as the teacher is more controllable than major non-school influences, MOREL chose the classroom teachers as the target of its development effort.

"If the single most potent and, at the same time, controllable factor in the learning of children is the teacher, then the behavior the teacher displays in the classroom is a most important factor in the teaching process."

Teacher education is a rich and rewarding area within which to work. As for myself I would chose no other. We know now that the reading that children and young people do will not be improved by the administration of a capsule, by facilitating their creeping and crawling, by the use of a machine, or by method "x." We can give up these searches and concentrate on what we surmised was the case all along -- that improved reading is the result of improved teaching, and in that pursuit many of us have a major stake.

A lack of consistency in the training of reading teachers, or more likely a lack of emphasis on reading and reading disorders within the curricula of the various teachers colleges and universities, is reflected by the inconsistency among school programs designed for children with reading disorders. It is disturbing that, at best, the curricula of most teachers' colleges require only three credit hours in a separate reading course, in many instances subsuming reading within a single general language arts course. Many teacher candidates graduate from teachers colleges without ever having had experience in teaching reading. It is also disturbing that less than one-third of the states require a separate reading course for teachers receiving certification at the general elementary level. Only a very small minority of teacher-training candidates have had courses dealing with reading disorders. When one considers that learning to read is one of the most crucial hurdles of the first three grades of school, it would seem that teachers of these grades should be specially prepared in this field; actually, the reverse appears to be the case. While older and more experienced teachers tend to shun the turmoil of the lower grades, the assignments fall more often to the new, young teachers, possibly on the assumption that enthusiasm and vitality may compensate for lack of experience.

That trained remedial-reading teachers are in short supply is reflected in the fact that only about two-thirds of the states have any special certification for reading specialists. There seem to be no available statistics that even provide an estimate of the number of teachers being trained or now functioning as remedial reading teachers in the 21,000 school districts of the United States.

It is surely doubtful that there can be eitrer an improvement in the quality of regular classroom instruction in reading or an expansion of special remedial programs for failing readers until more trained teachers are available.

READING DISORDERS IN THE UNITED STATES, Report of the Secretary's (HEW) National Advisory Committee on Dyslexia and Related Reading Disorders

August 1969

THE EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM

The classroom teacher is in a pivotal position, since the only general solution to reading difficulties is to prevent them from reading the crisis stage. Without prevention of this nature, the number of children and the expense involved in treatment through remedial programs assume such proportions that school systems are unable to deal with them.

No one is in a better position to prevent reading problems or to correct them as they appear than is the classroom teacher. An elementary school teacher, for instance, who meets a class for 175 days, has about 800 hours for observation. With a class, say, of 30 pupils theoretically a teacher has more than 25 hours to devote to each pupil. Even granting the time spend for group instruction, the classroom teacher has an opportunity for individual observation and instruction that is denied anyone else in the school system.

PREP, Correcting Reading Problems in the Classroom

COMPARISON RESEARCH

The most outstanding example of research comparing results of contrasting methods is a program financed by the United States Office of Education. At a cost of more than a million dollars, it compared methods through 27 separate studies in as many cities. A few of the advisers who approved the overall project for USOE were motivated by the rather naive hope that the research would indicate which method or methods are most successful in teaching children to read. All the studies used the same pre- and post-tests, but each contained uncoltrolled variables such as the time spent on reading and the background and competence of the teachers.

Much of this was what Jeanne Chall has accurately called comparing one ill-defined method with another ill-defined method. Russell G. Stauffer has stated, "One is led to believe that the Hawthorne effect was operating because in almost every instance the experimental populations made significantly greater gains than the control populations . . . In almost every instance in which the basic reader came out second best."

Two generalizations can safely be drawn from this, the most extensive comparative study of reading methods ever undertaken: (1) It is impossible to meet the needs of all children by any one method; (2) The most important element in any reading program is the teacher. It is the teacher, not the method, that makes the difference. A further generalization is perhaps reasonable. Since it appears that the Hawthorne effect was coupled with the significant gains made by experimental groups, teachers should be strongly encouraged to try methods of their own, to do action research rather than to follow slavishly the manuals and guides of reader systems. A million dollars may have been a heavy price to pay

for findings that prove to be only common sense, but if the findings bear fruit in our schools, the money and effort were not wasted.

THE EDUCATION DIGEST, A Challenge to Teachers of Reading, September 1969

Recent studies on reading have told us some significant things: One is that the single most important element in the success of a reading program is the teacher. Another is that most of the present methods and materials for teaching reading work for some children, but no one method works for all children. The upshot of these findings is that diagnostic teaching is necessary if all children are to succeed in reading, and that the teaching should be carried on by enthusiastic teachers who are trained in identifying reading skills and in matching problems with appropriate corrective techniques and materials.

AMERICAN EDUCATION, Let's be Practical About Reading, August--September 1969

INNOVATION AND CHANGE IN
READING INSTRUCTION

The Sixty-seventh Yearbook of the
National Society for the Study of Education

Chapter X

Professional Training of Reading Personnel

Mary C. Austin

Direct Quotes

Conant made twenty-seven recommendations calling for drastic changes in teacher preparation. In the teaching of reading, Conant suggested a minimum of three semester hours for all elementary-school teachers and twice that amount for teachers of kindergarten and the lower three grades. The additional hours for teachers of young children would deal primarily with the identification and correction of reading problems.

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The Harvard-Carnegie report drew attention to the discrepancy between theories encountered in college classes and practices in student-teaching centers. Whereas college instructors emphasized the need for diagnostic teaching which would lead to greater individualization of instruction according to pupil needs, students had little opportunity to do such teaching during their preservice classroom experience.

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Adams analyzed the degree of need felt by 268 Florida elementary-school teachers for learning about given aspects of the teaching of reading. At least 90 per cent of the respondents expressed a "great need" or "some need" to learn about remedial and corrective reading, diagnosis and treatment of reading problems, and ways of meeting individual differences.

These findings confirm those of the Harvard-Carnegie studies. They also suggest lack of confidence as well as competence on the part of the teachers. If lack of confidence fosters uneasiness, the teachers' insecurity may be transmitted to the children and may account for negative, random, or meaningless responses in both developmental and corrective reading sessions.

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Farinella's study, and others have pointed out that teachers lack knowledge of the technical skills of structural and phonic analysis which were deemed so vital by their own admission.

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In elementary schools, in which reading usually receives high priority, administrators also have expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of instruction. Results of two surveys of 640 public school administrators in a two-year period indicated that approximately 44 per cent of them agreed that the most effective method of teaching reading was not being utilized in their schools. While acknowledging that some methods were shaky, administrators placed a large share of the blame on teachers' training in colleges and on teachers' methods.

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To ameliorate preservice deficiencies, college faculties must continue to re-evaluate present reading-course content and conduct. Furthermore, college reading personnel should work more closely with public schools in establishing optimal conditions for apprentice teaching. It is especially important that interns be assigned to highly competent co-operating teachers and that college reading instructors visit schools frequently enough to assess an intern's individual strengths and weaknesses. Certainly a harmoniously functioning team can and should accomplish more in the preparation of classroom teachers than any individual member alone.

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